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ROMNEY ANNOUNCES \$3.1 MILLION FOR HOMELESS FAMILIES

Funds will renovate historic building for transitional housing in Roxbury

Striving to reduce homelessness in the Commonwealth, Governor Mitt Romney today awarded \$3.1 million to the Dimock Realty Corporation to renovate a historic building in Roxbury that will provide short-term housing for up to 28 homeless families as they transition to independence and self-sufficiency.

“With approximately 1,500 Massachusetts families currently living in shelters and motels, it is important that the Commonwealth provide decent and safe temporary housing opportunities to the homeless,” said Romney. “But it is equally important that we continue to provide resources and services to assist them in transitioning out of shelters and into permanent, independent housing.”

Boston Mayor Thomas Menino expressed his appreciation for the state grant, saying, “I applaud this step toward creating much-needed transitional housing for homeless families. No matter what the fiscal climate, we must work collectively to keep children in Boston and across the state from spending their youth in shelters and motels.”

Romney noted that Dimock Community Health Center has emerged as one of the leading community-based health and human service agencies in Massachusetts, annually serving more than 40,000 individuals, families and children in Boston’s inner-city area. With nearly 100 programs, Dimock specializes in comprehensive, high-quality services in Health and Community Services, Child and Family Development Services, Behavioral Health Services and Workforce Development.

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“Dimock Community Health Center is honored to partner with the Commonwealth to respond to the growing crisis of homelessness in Massachusetts,” said Jackie Jenkins-Scott, President and CEO of Dimock Community Health Center. “In a few short months, part of the historic Sewall building will become the temporary home for 28 homeless families.”

Construction on the project is expected to begin late next month with completion slated before the end of the year.

Romney said that today’s grant comes from the Housing Innovation Fund (HIF), a bond-funded program administered by the state Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). The HIF program is designed to produce alternate forms of housing for low-income individuals and families.

“While many HIF projects include units for the homeless, very few are designed to exclusively serve this population,” said DHCD Director Jane Wallis Gumble. “The Sewall Transition House will remain a viable source of attainable and affordable housing to the homeless for the next 30 years.”

Since taking office in January, Romney has made reducing homelessness a top priority of his Administration. Not only has he preserved benefits for homeless individuals and families in his Fiscal Year 2004 budget, Romney restored \$2 million to the Emergency Assistance Shelter program for homeless families in Fiscal Year 2003, which had been cut by the prior Administration. In addition, he created an interagency commission to prevent homelessness, which will identify immediate steps and long-term solutions to providing decent, safe and affordable housing to the homeless.

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